

AN AUTHENTICK
LETTER

FROM

Mr. ^HHUGHES,

A GENTLEMAN residing at LISBON,

TO HIS

FRIENDS in LONDON;

CONTAINING

Several curious and interesting Particulars in
Relation to the late Conspiracy against the King of
Portugal; with a circumstantial and affecting Ac-
count of the Behaviour of the principal Conspira-
tors at the Place of Execution, who suffered at
Lisbon, &c.

L O N D O N :

Printed and Sold by JOHN WILKIE, at the Bible,
in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

M.DCC.LIX.

AN AUTHENTIC

TRUE

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MR. HUGHES

A Gentleman residing at LISBON

TO HIS

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Several copies are
sent to the
with a circular
of the British
of the Place of
Lisbon, etc.

LONDON

Printed and Sold by J. W. White, at the
in the Strand

MCCCLX



LISBON, *Jan.* the 20th, 1759.

DEAR SIR,

IN Obedience to the Commands of you, and my other Friends in *England*, to trouble you with a few Lines, as often as any Thing material enough should happen here; to authorize my taking that Liberty, I now sit down to give you an Account (as well as I am am able, from the best Intelligence I could gather) of the late Commotion at *Lisbon*. I dare swear the publick Papers have already afforded you many different Reports with Regard to our Conspiracy; I am sure the Scene which I beheld last Saturday in Consequence of it, will never be out of my Mind as long as I live: But I shall begin

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gin Things in order, only hoping that you will excuse the Roughness of my Stile, since nothing but my ardent Desire to gratify you, &c. &c. &c.

It was about Ten o' Clock at Night, on the Third Day of *September* last, that his most Faithful Majesty the King of *Portugal*, after having been to pay a Visit, was returning again to the royal Palace at *Belem*, a Nobleman of the first Quality being at the same Time in the *Calash* with him, when he was attacked in the close Road, about three Quarters of an *English* Mile from that Place, by three armed Men in Disguise; one of which, bolting suddenly from behind some Trees, discharged a *Blunderbuss*, loaded with Sluggs, full in the back of the Carriage; by which the King was desperately wounded in the Arm; and the Nobleman, who sat by him, in two or three different Places.

One would think, that the Shock of such a Salute, should have been enough to deprive them of all Sense and Motion; but, on the contrary, such was the Providence of God at that Moment, that they had the Presence of Mind to couch down in the Bottom of the *Machine* (it was very large) by which Means they sheltered themselves from the succeeding Shot, and so escaped otherwise inevitable Death. For almost instantly after the first Fire, three *Blunderbusses* were discharged at once, which went through and through the upper Part of the *Calash* on every Side, killing the *Coachman* dead upon the Spot, and wounding the *Postilion* and one of the *Mules*. After this the *Affaulters*, favoured by the *Darkness*, or rather *Dusk*, got clear off.

-You may perhaps be surprized, Sir, that his Majesty should be without Attendance

dance upon this Occasion ; and really, considering the usual State and Pride which the *Portuguese* take upon them, it is somewhat extraordinary. Yet certain it is, that so far from having Guards, or any Thing like them, he had not even the common Retinue of a private *Gentleman*, a *Footman* on Horse-back : However, the Explosion of *Conspirators's* Pieces, soon brought People that Way.

At first they could not imagine what had happened ; but how shall I describe the Horror and Confusion which reigned as soon as they found how the Case really was ! The Sight of their wounded, and as they thought, murdered *King* (for by this Time, through Loss of Blood, his Majesty had fainted) threw them into such Consternation, that pursuing the *Assassins* was the least of their Thoughts. In a Word, Sir, it was above half an Hour ere a *Litter*, and proper Officers, could be got to bring
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his Majesty to the Palace, during which Time he remained in the open Road a bleeding Spectacle. And after he had got to Bed, and his Physicians about, by what I can learn, the Court, for the Remainder of the Night, was the most dismal Scene that can possibly be conceived.

This tragical Event fell out so late, that for that Night *Lisbon* slept secure in its Ignorance; nor indeed was it publicly spoken of there next Morning, though several Persons in the City were fully apprized of it. All you could observe was a Horror in every Body's Countenance, from whence you might gather that some fatal Accident had happened; but Nobody spoke, unless it was in Whisper to a particular Friend. Well, Sir, this continued till about Two o' Clock at Noon, when a *Proclamation* was issued, signifying, that the Government of the *Kingdom* was
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committed to a *Regency*; and at the same Time strictly prohibiting all Conversation with regard to Affairs of State, which People were commanded not even to mention, at their Peril.

It was now universally believed that the King was dead; and as every One was afraid to make Enquiries, that Belief daily gained Ground, till his Majesty being quite out of Danger, the *Court* began to grow less cautious, and the *Publick* were at once freed from their disagreeable Fear and Silence. But what was very odd, Sir, the *Government* seemed to give itself no Concern at all to come to the Bottom of this Affair; nor indeed was there any more Mention made about who the *Conspirators* should be, or whether they were *Conspirators*, or only common *Higbwaymen*, who did not know his Majesty's *Equipage*, than if such an extraordinary Outrage had

had never been committed. To say the Truth, every Thing seemed to wear a Kind of gloomy Silence; and People could not help observing, that all the *Troops* were drawing down towards the *Metropolis*; besides that, they were making a universal Change in the *Officers* of the *Army*. But what I am most surprized at, is, that the *Conspirators* themselves did not take the Hint to abscond upon those Overtures; yet so far were they from it, that it was remarked the *Duke D'Aveiro* was oftener at Court than any other *Nobleman*; nor did they perceive the gathering *Thunder*, till the Bolt fell upon them.

His Majesty had now for some Time begun to shew himself in Publick; and it was a Kind of Testimony of Joy for his Recovery, that several publick Entertainments immediately took place. Among the Rest, Sir, our *English Factory* gave a Ball,
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on the 28th of *December* in the Evening, to which most of the *Portugueze* Nobility were invited; and, among the Rest, the *Duke D'Aveiro*, his *Dutchess*, and *Son*. I was there, and saw them all dance; GOD knows, I little thought what was in their Hearts, and shortly they had Cause to change their merry Looks. About One in the Morning the Company broke up; and as Precedence is greatly minded in *Portugal*, no-body, you may be sure, would presume to stir till the Duke was gone. But how were some of the Company surprized, when coming to the outward Door soon after, in order to go Home, they were denied Permissi^{on}! and looking a little closer, saw all the Avenues full of armed Troops. No-body knew the Cause of this, and therefore every one was frightened out of their Wits. But the Embargo was soon taken off, and the whole Affair blown, that the *Duke D'Aveiro*, his *Dutchess*, and
Son,

Son, were arrested for being in the Conspiracy against the *King*, and that nobody was suffered to stir out till after they had been safely lodged in Prison.

Perhaps never was any Thing more artfully managed than this whole Scheme; for during the Interval of the Ball, while the Conspirators were engaged, all the Troops were brought into the Town. The Houses of every one of them was surrounded, and all their Friends and Domesticks seized, even to the youngest Child, and the meanest Servant. It is said that the *Dutchess D'Aveiro* immediately confessed, but the *Duke* persisted in his Innocence, till both he and his *Son* being put to the Rack, they two laid open the whole Conspiracy.

If one may credit Reports, the Cruelties that have been executed upon these unfortunate wicked Wretches, have sur-
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passed any Thing ever known: and indeed, if one may judge from the Appearance they made at Execution, and the diabolical Pain some of them suffered there, their precedent Tortures must have been very barbarous.

But, Sir, you may wonder how his Majesty got Intelligence of this Conspiracy. Why truly, the Account is something romantick; but I will venture to give it you, because I am certain it is very true.

The *Duke D'Aveiro* and his two Bravos, one of which has since absconded, who waylaid the King, having, as they thought, executed their horrid Design, immediately made off towards *Libon*, where they came to the House of one of the Ruffians. His Wife seeing the Duke, and having her Brother (a Glover in the Town) with her at that Moment, thrust them into the Closet

set of the Room, where she then was, and the Conspirators immediately after entered. Her Hurry and Fright was so great, for it seems this had been a usual Place of Meeting (though it seems that she was totally ignorant of their Secrets) that the poor Woman did not know what she was doing. Here, Sir, this Glover remained during the Rest of the Night, and to this insignificant Fellow was owing the Discovery of the Conspirators: for the Duke began to talk of their Exploit, and Designs with the utmost Freedom: *The Duke said in particular, that his Mind misgave him, they had not dispatched the King quite; but the other two said, they were sure he could not escape.* Aye, answered the Duke, with an Oath, *but we should not have left the Place till we had ocular Demonstration of his being dead.*

But, Sir, not to tire you with useless Repetitions, let it suffice to say, that they remained here for some Time, till

they thought every thing was hushed and quiet, and then departed without searching the Room for Eves-droppers, which doubtless saved the poor Glover's Life.

The Fellow thought indeed that the Discourse he had heard was very extraordinary, yet he did not know what to make of it: But coming into Town afterwards, and hearing the Rumour that flew about of his Majesty having been assaulted, &c. he put all Things together, and went directly to the Secretary of State with an Information; and this Evidence being corroborated by certain Advice that the King received from other Hands, every thing was regulated accordingly.

The Noblemen and others, taken up upon this Occasion, were as follows:

Duke D' Aveiro.

Dutchess D' Aveiro.

Mar-

Marquis De Alloria.

Marquis de Tavora, his Wife, and four Sons.

The Marquis of Tavora's Brother.

The Count de Attonquia,

Don Manuel De Souza.

Nuno De Tavora.

John De Tavora, &c. &c. &c.

After which a Reward was offered to any who should give a farther Information of the Persons concerned in the Conspiracy. And in Consequence of it several others were arrested, though nothing as yet is determined concerning them.

The Duke *D'Aveiro* is generally looked upon as the chief Contriver of this *Conspiracy*; and as the Motives generally assigned for his being so, is his Ambition to get the Crown into his Family, either by marrying his Son to the Princess of the
Bra-

Brazils, or else to get himself proclaimed King in Injury to her Right, by the Intreagues of a Faction.

But I must inform you, Sir, that all this is very unlikely: For the Duke was a Man more odious to the Populace, than any *Grandee* in *Portugal*. He has always behaved very unbecoming his Rank and Fortune, in every Respect; so that even if he had succeeded in the Business of Affassination, it is hardly possible that he should have carried his Point any farther.

But, Sir, in reality, the Reason of his embarking in this Diabolical Scheme, was Resentment, not Ambition. The Truth of the Case is this, as my Brother had it from the first Clerk of the Treasury, who read the Duke's own Confession, as it was taken from the Rack.

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The Duke's Uncle, *Don Mignel de Monizes*, had been in great Favour with the late King; infomuch, that his present Majesty, then Prince, was not a little jealous of his Power. And as Favourites are apt to be presumptuous, it is said, that in some Conferences between the Prince and him, in which his Highness took him pretty soundly to Task for many Things, in which he thought he acted with more Prerogative than was fit for a Subject to assume. The Minister retorted Accusation with Accusation, and in short paved the Way to his own Ruin.

The present King of Portugal, tho' a most excellent Prince, is extremely haughty and tenacious of Respect. When he came to the Crown therefore, one of the first Things he did, was to revenge himself on the Insolence of *Don Mignel*, whom he banished to the Coast of *Africa*.

Many

Many Sollicitations were made in his Favour, but in vain; till about three Years ago, when some Papers being to be examined, relative to his late Administration, on a strict Scrutiny it was thought there was Matter of much higher Attainter against him; for which even his Life might be made answerable.

He was immediately recalled, imprisoned, and a Tryal ensued; but Matters of Fact were either so confused, or so weak against him, that it was found impolitick to condemn him on any of them. However, the King still continued his Displeasure, and commanding him to his former Place of Exile, forbid his Friends and Family even to correspond with him.

This, Sir, you may depend upon being the real, and sole Motive of the House *D'Aveiro* in their late bloody Project.

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Thinking it incumbent upon them to revenge an Affront, even though imaginary only, as all the *Portuguese* do, let the Crime committed, and the Danger run in the Enterprize, be ever so horrid.

The *Duke D'Aveiro* was Grand-Master of the King's Household; but now all his Respect and Quality was forfeited, and he was no longer regarded but as the vilest Malefactor. The Prisoners were disposed of, upon being seized, in the following Manner: The *Duke D'Aveiro* with his Son, as well the *Marquis De Tavora* with his three Sons, and the Count *D'Attongia*, his Son in Law, were all Prisoners in the Castle at *Belem*, and loaded with Irons. Their Food was nothing but Bread and Water; and they were each of them put to the Rack six Times. I have already mentioned to you, that all the Relations of the principal Conspirators were seized,

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but

but they were not all treated with the same Rigour. Some of them, for Instance, were allowed to have their ordinary Domesticks, and were neither guarded nor bolted. *Don Manuel De Calteiris* and *Antonio De Costa* are in St. John's Tower. The old Marchioness *De Tavora* was only closely shut up in the Convent *De Grilles*, till two Days before her Execution, when she was brought to the Castle where her Sons and her Husband were, but she was not suffered to see or speak to either. The Dutches *D'Aveiro* is in the Convent *de Madre de Dio*, with her Daughters.

Judicial Proceedings in *England* and in *Portugal* are quite different; here the King and Council are the supreme Law. Those *Conspirators* therefore were proceeded against no Body knew how, nor can I give you any Account of them till their Appearance on Saturday last on the Key
at

at *Belem*, when they came to be burnt, torn, and cut to Pieces, in Sight of the Royal Palace.

At *Belem*, on the Key, just over-against the Royal Palace, was a Stage erected, about twice as high as a Man: There were Stairs on one Side to ascend; it was Wood, and had no Hangings upon it of any Kind. Here stood the Instruments of Death, and several Forms, which were fastened to the Ground, each having a large Piece of Sail-cloth lying near it. I believe there might be about seventy-thousand Spectators; however, the Scaffold was surrounded by both Foot and Horse, all with their Bayonets fixt, and just as the Clock struck Nine the Tragedy began.

The Marchioness *De Tavora* was the first who suffered; and though the Castle was but a little Way, she was brought to

the Place of Execution in a covered Waggon; two ill-looking Fellows being in it with her. She was reported to have lost her Senses, and I believe it was Truth. Her Arms were tied down with a common Rope; she was a very tall Woman, and might be, as near as I could guess, fifty Years old. When she ascended the Scaffold, there was a horrid Shout from the Populace; and at the same Time the Executioner placed a Stool in the Front for her to sit down on; instead of which she immediately fell on her Knees, and continued bowing her Body back and forward for about five Minutes in great Disorder. She had a Kind of white Hood on her Head, very much soil'd, a black Mantle over her Shoulders, and her Gown was of a redish Colour. The Executioner signed to the two Men who guarded her, upon which they took her up, and placed her on the Stool, seemingly with some Difficulty;

ty. Here she was tied, and her Hood and Mantle being taken off, the Executioner laying hold of her Hair, with one Blow of a large Backsword, almost cut off her Head : I say almost,] for it hung upon her Breasts, and afterwards fell from thence into her Lap. Now there was another loud Shout, and the Body was taken up, laid upon one of the Forms, and covered with a Sail-cloth.

Then came *Joseph Maria*, her Son, a Lad of about sixteen Years of Age, and as beautiful a Youth as ever I laid my Eyes on ; he was in Regimentals. They stript him to his Shirt and Breeches immediately ; and being tied to the Wheel, or rather Cross, the first Executioner put a Rope of Catgut about his Neck, and strangled him. For my Part, I could not bear to look, as his Face was uncovered. When this was near done the other Executioner broke
him;

him; and his Body was laid and covered like his Mothers.

The Count *D'Attonguia* had been in a Fever some Days; and when he appeared with the young Marquis *De Tavora*, a very handsome well made Man, he was not able to stand up. They were both served in the same Manner with *Joseph Maria*. The young Marquis behaved with great Intrepidity; but the Servants, who afterwards suffered, behaved frantick, struggling (though they were all strangled before they were broke) with the Officers, and making a great Noise.

The old Marquis of *Tavora* was broke on the Wheel alive; poor Gentleman, he had received the Rack so often, that he was hardly able to get up the Stairs. He came to the Place of Execution in an open Cart with the Duke *D'Aveiro*, who remained

mained in it, at the Foot of the Scaffold, while the other was dispatched before his Eyes. After they had taken the Ropes from his Arms, and the Irons from his Legs, in order to fix him to the Wheel, he went towards the Sail-cloths, and lifted them up every one without being hindered ; but when he came to his younger Son's Body, he kneeled down, kissed the Corps, and wept loud ; he then spoke something to the Executioner, and took hold of the Iron-crow with which he was to be broke. The Executioner seemed to shew him some Respect. He was then tied to the Engine, and they broke his right Arm, upon which a Herald proclaimed his Crime ; but his Shrieks, Sir, would have pierced the hardest Heart ; nor did they ever cease, (I believe he might, though he received but three Blows alive, be near a Quarter of an Hour under the Executioner's Hands) till he got the *Coup de Grace*, as they call it.

Then

Then mounted the *Duke*, who was treated worse than any of them. His Hands were instantly chopped off, under a Supposition that he had fired one of the Blunderbusses at the King : Then, bleeding as he was, he was tied to the Wheel, where he languished an Hour and a Quarter, receiving eight Strokes. In about half an Hour his Face became totally black, and his Screams at every Stroke was enough to frighten one. With the last Stroke they broke his Belly, and his Bowels came out ; then he was laid aside like the Rest.

Upon this two Fellows came on the Stage with Tools, where they fixed up a Couple of Stakes, with pitched Seats, and a Quantity of Fewel was brought, to burn the Duke *D'Aveiro's Bravo*, who had shot the King. He mounted in a pitched Coat, and being forced to sit down to the Stake,

to

to which he was chained; the Bodies were brought, one by one, and placed round him, being all shrewed over with Rosin, I believe about an Inch thick; then the Faggots were laid on, and the Whole set on Fire; but this is a Scene which will not bear Description. After the Execution the Ashes were swept up, and thrown into the *Tagus*.

During the Time of the Execution, all the Conspirators Houses were pulled down to the Ground, and as soon as the Rubbage can be removed, the Places on which they stood will be sown with Salt. All those of their Families, which either through Justice, or Mercy, shall be spared, will be obliged to change their Names; for I must let you know that the Conspirators were degraded from their Honours the Day before they suffered, and their

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Estates

Estates were publickly sold by Auction
What will be the Fate of those still in Pri-
son, is uncertain.

I am, Sir, and the
The Taggots were laid on, and the
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Your most dutiful Nephew,

JOSEPH HUGHES.

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